

Press Release
Ellen Thesleff and Her Contemporaries
Exhibitions
In the Maire Gullichsen Collection
24.09.2007, Project Room 12.10.07 – 20.01.08

Media Event: Thursday, October 11, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

Press Event Open to the Public: Friday, October 12, at 12:00 PM.

Exhibition Opening Reception: Friday, October 12, at 6:00 PM. Welcome!

For Ellen Thesleff, art represented the spiritual essence of existence and the transformation of its unseen devotion into the language of images. Thesleff was an extremely self-critical artist who destroyed or painted over many of her works if she was dissatisfied with them. Her ultimate goal, both in art and life, was the pursuit of absolute beauty and the creation of a perfect masterpiece.

At the turn of the 20th century, Thesleff's art transitioned from symbolism and restrained color palettes to a bolder, more colorful approach. As one of Finland's first expressionists, she was an outsider in the Finnish art scene of her time but courageously followed her unique path. Her strong principles and vision earned her a place as the only woman participating in the first exhibition of the Septem group alongside Juho Rissanen, Verner Thomé, and Magnus Enckell. However, she left the group soon after the exhibition.

Italy became Thesleff's second home, although she also lived and worked in Finland for extended periods, including 1909–1912. She was introduced to the woodcut technique by English theater artist Gordon Craig, whom she met in Florence in 1907.

Ellen Thesleff was born on October 5, 1869, in Helsinki, where she also passed away on January 12, 1954. During her childhood and youth, she lived on Kumpusaari Island in Kuopio. She studied under Adolf von Becker in Helsinki, at the Finnish Art Society's Drawing School, and at the Académie Colarossi in Paris under Courtois. Italy also became an important influence for her, particularly during her woodcut studies in Florence.

The **Ellen Thesleff and Her Contemporaries** exhibition marks the beginning of regular presentations of the Maire Gullichsen Art Foundation Collection in the Project Room. In addition to Thesleff's works, the exhibition provides insight into her life through photographs and a timeline.

Partners:

Mikkeli Art Museum, Kuopio Art Museum, Aine Art Museum (Tornio), and Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland r.f.

Further information about the exhibition:

Acting Exhibition Curator Laura Selin, Tel. +358 2 621 1089, Email: laura.selin@pori.fi

Press Photos:

Visit www.poriartmuseum.fi > Media > Learn More About the Exhibition > Press Photos

Translated with ChatGPT